Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

SP-02 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15

STR-01 CEA-01 L-02 H-01 PRS-01 PA-01 USIA-06 /086 W 019646

R 041236Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2147

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, EINV, KU, XE

SUBJECT: KUWAITI FINANCIAL ACTIVITY IN EAST ASIA

REF: (A) KUWAIT 330 (NOTAL) (B) KUALA LUMPUR 411 (NOTAL)

1. WE HAVE LEARNED OF SEVERAL RECENT DEVELOPMENTS WHICH POINT TOWARD INCREASING KUWAITI INTEREST IN EAST ASIAN AREA. THESE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INCLUDE FOLLOWING: (A) MAJOR REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT IN WESTERN

AUSTRALIA BEING CONSIDERED; (B) PARTICIPATION BY KUWAIT INVESTMENT COMPANY IN NEW INVESTMENT CONSORTIUM INCLUDING AUSTRALIAN AND JAPANESE PARTNERS WHICH WILL BE BASED IN HONG KONG; (C) ESTABLISHMENT OF BRANCH IN HONG KONG OF ALAHLI BANK, ONE OF KUWAIT'S GIVE COMMERCIAL BANKS, AND (D) THE PLANNED VISIT TO MALAYSIA BY KUWAI T

FUND FOR ARAB ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM. IN ADDITION TAIYO-KOBE BANK OF JAPAN IS MINORITY PARTNER IN NEWLY FORMED INVESTMENT COMPANY BASED IN KUWAIT.

- 2. OVER PAST YEAR KUWAIT INVESTMENT COMPANY HAS BOUGH ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK BONDS, AND KUWAIT INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT COMPANY HAS ARRANGED \$7 MILLION LOAN TO PHILIPPINES. ABOUT TWO DOZEN KUWAIT BUSINESSMEN TOOK PART IN TRADE AND INVESTMENT MISSION LAST FALL TO MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE, AND INDONESIA.
- 3. KUWAITIS SEEM TO BE MORE INTERESTED IN MALAYSIA THAN ANY OTHER SINGLE COUNTRY IN THE REGION. THEY ARE WARY OF POLITICAL SITUATION IN PHILIPPINES AND INDONESIA, ALTHOUGH WE UNABLE CONFIRM INFO CONTAINED IN RECENT CABLE FROM JAKARTA (1192) THAT GOK ATTACHING POLITICAL CONDITION TO LOANS AND/OR INVESTMENTS BEING MADE IN SOUTH EAST ASIA. KUWAITIS BELIEVE THAT OPPORTUNITIES IN AUSTRALIA AND SINGAPORE WILL BE LIMITED EITHER BY RESTRICTIVE LAWS (AUSTRALIA) OR LIMITED INTEREST BY LOCAL BUSINESSMEN (SINGAPORE). IN GENERAL, HOWEVER, KUWAITIS CAN BE EXPECGED TO PAY INCREASING ATTENTION TO INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN REGION, BUT IT IS LIKELY THAT THEY WILL RELY TO CONSIDERABLY DEGREE ON LOCAL, INCLUDING JAPANESE, INSTITUTIONS

WHO ARE THOUGHT TO HAVE FAR GREATER KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL IN INVESTING IN THE REGION. STOLTZFUS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994 Channel Indicators: n/a

Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Concepts: ECONOMIC COOPERATION, FOREIGN INVESTMENT, TECHNOLOGICAL EXCHANGES, VISITS

Control Number: n/a Copy: SINGLE Draft Date: 04 FEB 1975 Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960 Decaption Note: Disposition Action: RELEASED Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MartinML
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975KUWAIT00566

Document Number: 1975KUWAIT00566 Document Source: CORE Document Unique ID: 00

Drafter: n/a Enclosure: n/a Executive Order: N/A Errors: N/A

Film Number: D750040-0646

From: KUWAIT

Handling Restrictions: n/a

Image Path:

Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750275/aaaacpet.tel Line Count: 92

Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM Office: ACTION NEA

Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Original Handling Restrictions: n/a Original Previous Classification: n/a Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a

Page Count: 2

Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Previous Classification: Limited Official USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 KUWAIT 330, 75 (NOTAKUALA LUMPUR 411
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MartinML

Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: Review Date: 03 JUL 2003

Review Event:

Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 JUL 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2003 by MartinML>

Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JÚL 2006

Review Media Identifier: Review Referrals: n/a Review Release Date: n/a Review Release Event: n/a **Review Transfer Date:** Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a

Secure: OPEN Status: NATIVE

Subject: KUWAITI FINANCIAL ACTIVITY IN EAST ASIA TAGS: EAID, EINV, KU, XE
To: STATE

Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006